



## Interesting Stuff - June 2011

I'm often taken by stories of other people, where they've succeeded and especially where they've done things many of us find difficult.

For some that's simply being afraid to ask. Fear of rejection? Fear that they might say yes? Who knows?

Maybe we do lots of hard work to generate a new business contact, but then shy away from asking for the business. Maybe it's in a relationship; where there's something we want our partner or colleague to do, but we don't ask outright (perhaps we think they should "know" what we want).



Anyway I recently came across Chad Pregracke, who in 1997 aged 21, set out on a one-man mission to clear up the Mississippi River. Whilst you may be able to spell Mississippi (m – i – double s – i – double s – i – double p – i), did you know that it was full of rubbish?

Chad started with a 20-foot boat and his own two hands. Since then he's cleared more than 1,000 miles of the Mississippi, pulling more than 1 million tons of debris from the riverbanks, including 55,300 tyres and even 83 toilets!

Using the power of asking, he's raised millions of dollars in donations and enlisted more than 60,000 people to help him in his crusade.

When Chad realised he would need more barges, trucks and equipment, he asked state and local officials for help, only to be turned down. Not to be dissuaded, Chad grabbed a phone book, turned to the business listings, and called Alcoa – because in his words, "it began with A".

Armed only with his passionate commitment to his dreams, Chad asked to speak to the "top guy". Eventually, Alcoa gave him \$8,400. Later, working through the "A"s, he called Anheuser-Busch. The conversation went something like this:

"Will you give me some money?" Chad asked.

"Who are you?" replied Mary Alice Ramirez.

"I want to get rid of the garbage in the Mississippi River," Chad said.

"Can you show me a proposal?" Ramirez inquired.

"What's a proposal?" Chad replied.

Ramirez eventually invited Chad to a meeting and gave him a cheque for \$25,000 to expand his Mississippi project.

More important than Chad's knowledge or skills was his clear desire to make a difference, his unflagging enthusiasm, his complete dedication to the project – and his willingness to ASK. Everything Chad has needed he's secured by – ASKING.

You can find out more about Chad at [www.livinglandsandwaters.org](http://www.livinglandsandwaters.org).

### **Ask, ask, ask – start today**

What are the things that you're not asking for?

- At home
- At work

Make a list.

And ask yourself, how you stop yourself from asking. What is your fear?

Write down what it is costing you not to ask.

Then write down the benefit you will get if you do ask.

And finally ..... ASK.

### **Funding**

The Skills Funding Agency have released some further funding towards developing leadership & management. This is being called Leadership & Management Advisory Service (LMAS for short) and is designed to support senior business leaders to grow their organisations.

As with similar schemes in the past, it provides matched funding which could give you an extra £1,000 worth of training or coaching. As an example, this would mean that you could get our support for a whole year through [TheLeadersForum](#) for just £500+VAT AND leave you with another £500 to use on other development. How good is that!

In Greater London the scheme is being managed by Exemplas and details can be found at [www.exemplas.com/LMAS](http://www.exemplas.com/LMAS).

Outside of London, in the East of England (so Herts, Beds, Cambs, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex) it's run by EMB – [www.embltd.co.uk](http://www.embltd.co.uk).

If you're interested drop me an email and I'll let you know precisely who to contact, so you can check whether this applies.

### **What's happening in Kenya?**

The good news is that the rains have stopped so work can press on at our farming project and plans can be finalised for the drilling of a bore hole that will give access to the local spring water supply.

We are also now extending our bursaries. During 2011 we've ensured that five Kenyan children, who would not otherwise be in school, have been able to attend secondary school. Though doing well in their primary school exams, their families couldn't afford the secondary school fees. So we got involved and with the help of four other fantastic families who agreed to sponsor a child, the children are now nearly half way through their school year.

Here's the ASK.

Please watch our video – [www.redrubberball.co.uk/foundation](http://www.redrubberball.co.uk/foundation).

We're actively looking for more families to sponsor children in 2012.

**Book review – “How to have a life not just a business – 10 things you can do today”**

Yes it's free.

I know that some people had problems downloading the e-book. Well I got out my “web links for dummies” guide and have re-set the link.

So if you've not yet been able to get your copy and would like it – click on [www.redrubberball.co.uk/a-big-thank-you](http://www.redrubberball.co.uk/a-big-thank-you).



Neil